

REMARKS

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 8-13 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan 317 (JP 11-334317) taken in view of at least one of Europe 898 (EP 788898) and Europe 270 (EP 565270). Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan 317 (JP 11-334317) taken in view of at least one of Europe 898 (EP 788898) and Europe 270 (EP 565270) and further in view of Watanabe et al (US 5,109,903). Claims 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan 317 (JP 11-334317) taken in view of at least one of Europe 898 (EP 788898) and Europe 270 (EP 565270) and further in view of Gerresheim et al (US 5,996,661). Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan 317 (JP 11-334317) taken in view of at least one of Europe 898 (EP 788898) and Europe 270 (EP 565270) and further in view of Iwamura et al (US 56,109,317). Claims 5, 7, and 17 have been canceled without prejudice. Claim 7 has been indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 7. Consequently, claim 1, as well as claims 2-4, 6, and 8-16 which depend from claim 1, are in condition for allowance.

In light of this amendment, all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable. Thus, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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